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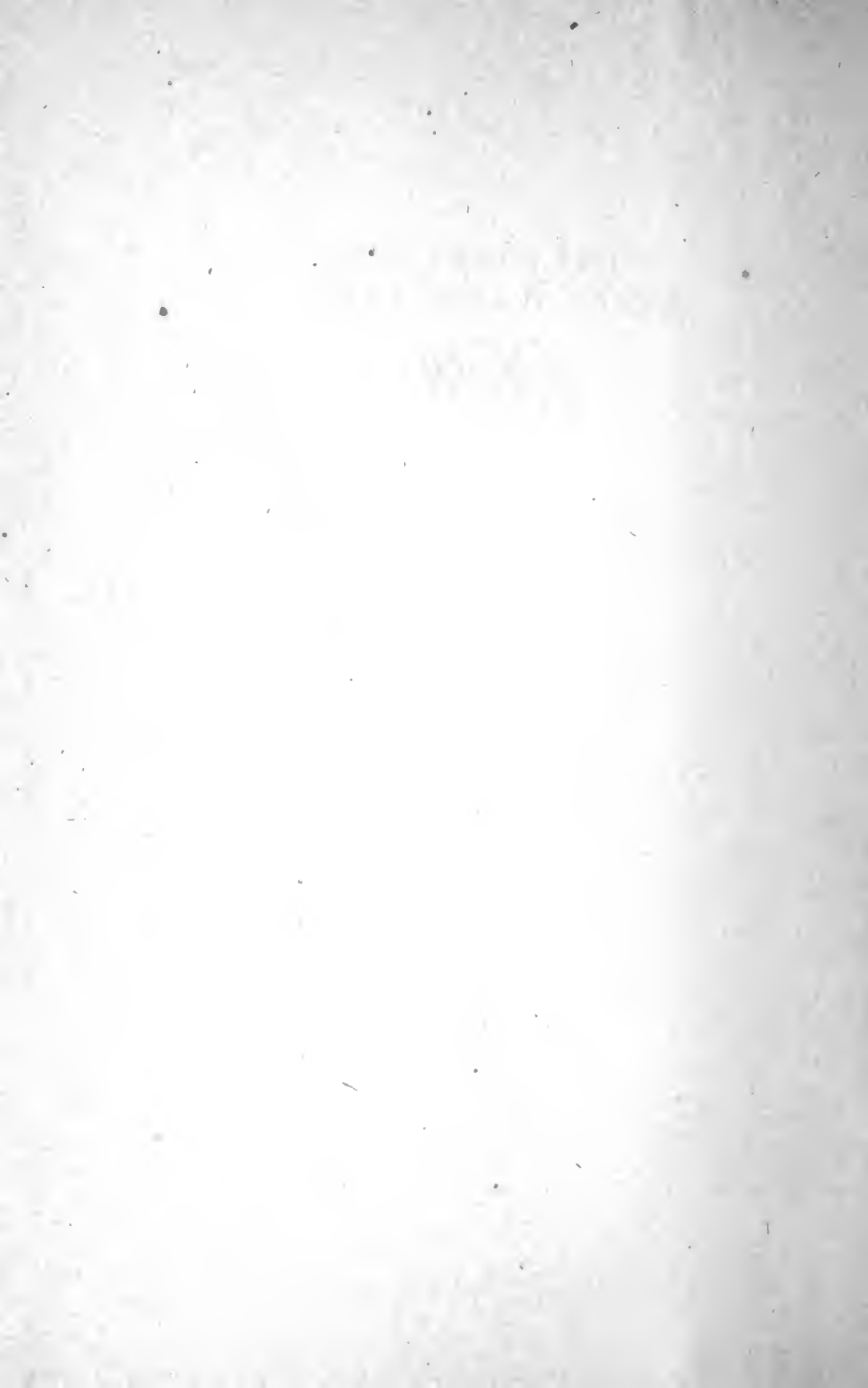


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THE POEMS OF
RALPH E. McMILLIN

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Ralph E. McMillin

THE POEMS
of
RALPH E. McMILLIN



BOSTON
MASSACHUSETTS
1919

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FOREWORD

RALPH EDWARD McMILLIN was born in Amsterdam, New York, June 8, 1882. His childhood after the first two years was passed in North Adams, Massachusetts, where he grew up among the Berkshire Hills. He graduated from Phillips Andover Academy in 1901 and spent some time in both Williams College and Columbia University. In Williams he became a member of the Theta Delta Chi Society.

In 1904 he went to Boston and began his newspaper career as a reporter on the *Boston Record*. In 1905 he went to the *Herald*, where he remained about eight years — first as reporter, afterwards as Sporting Editor and Sunday Editor. In 1914 he became associated with the *Journal*, where he did special writing until he joined the editorial staff of the *American* in 1916. He was married in 1907 to Miss Mary Emmott, of North Adams. Two children, John and Elizabeth, were born to them. He died at his home in Medford, February 10, 1918.

In the beginning of his newspaper career his natural interest in college athletics turned his pen first to sports, and soon his stories of great games became a feature of Boston papers. He made these stories remarkable because of his sense of dramatic and poetic values. Whether he wrote of a ball game or of some tragedy or comedy of life, he wrote always with the vision of the poet. The strain of poetic feeling running through all his work made it

distinctive. His keen sense of humor, too, was a delight to all who knew his work. The poems which were constantly appearing under his name he never regarded seriously. He wrote them because he had to — they flowed from his pen without effort. He never spoke of them or seemed to remember their existence. Many of them were written for his children.

His Liberty Loan poems attracted the attention of the Liberty Loan Committees both in Boston and Washington, and they obtained permission from him to use them in the various campaigns. They were so used both before and after his death.

In these later years he was kept busy with stories of great international crises and calamities. The great questions and issues of the War awoke in him an exalted patriotism. Through his pen he did amply and fully his part in the winning of the War. Throughout all his life he won scores of friends. It was said of him that he never lost a friend. His associates loved him. The tributes they have offered to his memory are very numerous and beautiful.

In the closer relations of life he won always deep and boundless affection. His unfailing personal charm, his brilliancy of intellect, his lovable boyish nature made up a rare personality.

This volume of his verse is dedicated to his memory by those who love him best.

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WAR POEMS

CONSECRATION

LORD of all battles, throned in splendor,
High in the smoky mists above,
Once more our legions homage render,
Chanting their battle song of love.

*Love of America, they sing,
Who guard her fate ;
Up to Thy awful throne they bring
No song of hate.*

Proudly our ships, in battle column,
Sail out upon the troubled sea;
Swiftly the drum-beat, hollow, solemn,
Calls all our chivalry to Thee.

*Love of America, they sing,
Who guard her fate ;
Up to Thy awful throne they bring
No song of hate.*

Lord of all battles, glory lend them,
Our sons from mountain and from shore,
Soberly, tenderly, we send them
Into Thy thund'ring lists once more.

*Love of America, they sing,
Who guard her fate;
Up to Thy awful throne they bring
No song of hate.*

CHRISTMAS EVE, 1914

WHEN Hans his wooden sword lays by,
And Gretchen sings her doll to sleep,
When twilight dulls the English sky,
And tiny figures dreamward creep,
O'er hill and valley, lane, and lea,
And war-torn towns beside the sea,
Creeps Christmas-as-it-used-to-be.

When little Olga says good-night,
And small Marie her prayers has said,
When wee Pierre has turned the light,
And scurried hastily to bed,
For once the sleep of tears and fears
Is broken, and the dreamer hears
The Christmas bells of other years.

Upon the battle lines the pall
Of darkness closes slowly in,
Above the lonely bugle call
The cannon roars its evening din.
Then, while they count the day's grim cost,
Stalks, through the tattered ranks and toss'd,
The brooding Ghost of Christmas-lost.

War takes its toll of tiny hearts,
And thrives on children's shattered dreams,
"Good will" goes, too, when peace departs,
Yet where our peaceful standard gleams,
And Christmas comes to you and me,
How many a waif the dream will see,
Of Christmas-as-it-ought-to-be.

APRIL FOOL

LO," said the war god, "I've loosed my legions,
Over the earth I have cast my spell;
The darkness has come in my blood red regions,
And life has ceased where my footsteps fell."

Then Spring came back with its burst of glory
And the sun beat down on the trodden plain,
And there, by the rim of the trenches gory,
The April violets bloomed again.

"The earth is mine," roared the war god, shaking
His smoky mane to the breezes cool,
But the old earth smiled in its Spring awaking
And answered cheerily, "April Fool."

THE CONSCRIPT — 1917

FOR Smith and Brown and Jones,
All common men like me,
I'll march to where my ship
Lies gray-clad in the sea.
And tossed half 'round the world,
Through smiling luck or ill,
For Smith and Brown and Jones
I'll learn to maim and kill;
*For Smith and Brown and Jones — old friends —
To dare whatever Fortune sends.*

And Smith shall plod along
The old path year by year,
And Jones shall work and dream
And carve his small career;
While Brown among his kids
Shall bask in home-love ease;
What glory mine to fight
For common men like these!
*For Smith and Jones and Brown, all three,
To fight and kill beyond the sea.*

For Smith and Brown and Jones,
A hundred million more;
My lot of Fate is drawn
My ship is at the shore;

My fingers clutch the gun,
And faster beats my heart;
I pray as homeland fades
For strength to do my part
For Smith and Jones and Brown, but then
None ever died for better men.

THE LONE STAR'S LEAD

(The American flag was borne into action on the French front to-day by a young Texan who carried the banner on his bayonet in a charge against the German trenches. — *News note.*)

ABOVE the fields of Picardy,
Behold another star,
A Lonely Star that shows the trail
Across the trenches' scar —
And Davy Crockett's spirit rides
With Henry of Navarre.

Bright shines that star for sunny France
O'er faces worn and wan,
To blaze a Starry Banner's way
Across the ocean's span —
And Davy Crockett's spirit rides
Beside the white Joan.

The Lone Star of the Alamo
Shines o'er a fight again,
It glistens on a gory field
Amid the leaden rain —
And Davy Crockett's spirit rides
With that of Charlemagne.

And brighter stars in glory borne
Shall sweep across the sea
To follow, in the Lone Star's lead,
The pathway of the free —
And Davy Crockett's spirit rides
With that of Liberty.

TO THE RESCUE

(The Call of La Belle France)

TIS not for alms she cries —
Wounded and sore oppressed,
France with her weary eyes,
Pressing against her breast
Village and home and country-side,
Blackened and crushed in the war-path wide —
But as a maid for a knight to ride
Out of the shining West.

This were a true knight's task,
Knight in the purest mail,
Gleaming from spur to casque,
As one who seeks the Grail.
Lovely and wistful and sad she stands,
Crimson the stains on her white, torn hands,
Crimson her feet on the roadside sands —
Lovely and wan and frail.

Ride to the rescue, then,
Knights of the Western Land,
Taking the lists again,
Glittering sword in hand.
Nor when the din of the battle's done
Rest ye content with the vict'ry won;
Bind ye the scars of the vanished Hun —
Building her villages one by one —
Ever in peace to stand.

JOFFRE

SHATTERED the Uhlan lances lie
Where the trampled lily lifts her head
And the shining Marne flows flashing by
Through the fields of the consecrated dead
And the lances rot in the crimsoned sod.
Deep-buried there the Spring blades quiver,
But the lily smiles through her tears to God,
Raised by thy hand by the silent river.

SOMEWHERE

SAY good-bye and march away,
Somewhere "over there."
You shall be both night and day
Somewhere in my prayer.
Somewhere in my constant dreaming
Visions, yours, will rise.
Look and see the love-light gleaming
"Somewhere in my eyes."

Say good-bye and seek the ships;
Somewhere o'er the sea.
May the mem'ry of my lips
Hold you fast to me.
Though the ocean tides that sever
Keep us worlds apart
You shall be right here, forever, —
"Somewhere in my heart."

Say good-bye, nor let the tears
Drown the soldier's smile;
I shall put away my fears
Somewhere for a while.
Somewhere I'll find strength for bearing
All of war's alarms,
Till I hold you, honors wearing,
"Somewhere in my arms."

“THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND”

IN my memory's a picture
Dearly cherished through the years
Of a figure in a doorway,
Slender, girlish; smiles and tears
Struggle in her face together.
My own eyes are strangely blind
As I say “Good-bye, God bless you,”
To the “Girl I Left Behind.”

There's a picture too — a campfire,
Where a ragged boy reclines
Holding in his hands a letter,
Poring o'er its tender lines,
And once more my eyes are dimmer
As again across my mind
Runs the sweet and love-lit message
Of the “Girl I Left Behind.”

Years have passed and peace has blessed
 them;
Battle visions — lurid gleams
Of the old days cluster round me,
Smoky phantoms in my dreams,
But I face the Gray Foe, waiting
In the Shadow, calm, resigned,
For I know that waiting with me
Is the “Girl I Left Behind.”

HER SOLDIER OF '17

A STEP in the street and a swift good-bye,
A rush and a sob by the old hall stair,
And grandmother's needles more swiftly fly
As over her knitting she breathes a prayer —
A prayer that is meant for no mortal ears,
A tenderly murmured "Thy will be done,"
As echoing out of the past she hears
The voice of her soldier of 'sixty-one.

Then grandmother's grandmother, old and gray,
Sat propped in the selfsame cushioned seat,
And heard, as they faded so soon away,
The footsteps, alert in the silent street,
The sob and the rush and the sweet good-byes —
All memories dear for her heart to delve —
And then, through the mist that dimmed her eyes,
The voice of her soldier of eighteen-twelve.

A nation's career and a hundred years
Since under the trees of the budding lane
She choked back the flood of the blinding tears
And clasped at a heart that was racked with
pain —
The low and the soberly-spoken word —
How strangely the sad, sweet memories mix —
And grandmother's grandmother's mother heard
The voice of her soldier of 'seventy-six.

War-torn are the hills of the world once more,
And over the seas sounds the bugle call,
And sweet as the maids of the days of yore,
The brave, true girl in the lonely hall;
As old as the earth when the first gay Springs
With magic of love turned a gray world green,
With ancient, echoing meaning it rings —
The voice of her soldier of 'seventeen.

SURE, 'T WAS AN IRISHMAN STARTED THE FIGHT

(Somewhere in France, October 27, 1917. The first American shot of the war with Germany on French soil was fired by a red-haired Irishman. — *Cable dispatch.*)

SURE! who else would ye pick out to start it?

Ye'd have it official, I trow.

And who would ye have to impart it —

The news of an illigant row?

'T is a message ye'd send to the Kaiser

That'd make him grow green in his fright?

He'll hear this, both sadder and wiser —

“An Irishman's started a fight!”

Sure! he's met them before down to Wipers;

They've cudgelled his Hindenburg line

Where they swarmed to the lilt of their pipers

And swore to go through to the Rhine.

Sure now that his dreams grow unaisy

At the flag “in the dawn's early light,”

'T is a blow, sure, to knock a king hazy —

“An Irishman's started a fight!”

Sure, there's red in his hair like the sunshine,

There's blue in his eyes like the sky;

His soul is pure white where the guns shine

And the shriek of the shrapnel sounds high.

The world knows he's never a quitter;

'T is the Kaiser knows best, in his might;

Sure, it's sad news for the Germans and bitter —

“An Irishman's started a fight!”

ABEY AND JIMMY AND MIKE

The Return of "Boston's Own" Regiment

ABEY and Jimmy and Mike went out in the rattle
of lusty cheers
To a farewell kiss and a brave, sweet smile through
the dimness of women's tears;
And Abe pulled the peak of a checkered cap o'er the
mist of his own moist eyes,
And Jimmy and Mike swung their battered hats
to the wave of the last good-byes.
And each with the wonder of what the war in its
grim store held for him
Marched by to the call of the Nation's Draft —
Abey and Mikey and Jim.

Abey and Mikey and Jim caught on to the swing
of the army life,
With its shoulder arms and its bugle calls and its
lessons in bloody strife.
And Abey and Mikey and Jim, all three, with the
spirit of soldiers born,
Sailed in with a vim for their daily job from the
blush of the first gray morn.
And out on the sweep of the drill grounds rise where
the roaring sergeants rave,
They learned what it is to be "fighting men" —
Jimmy and Mikey and Abe.

Abey and Mikey and Jim come back — mark now
how their faces beam —
In the olive drab, with their shoulders set and their
brand new guns a-gleam.
To Abey and Mikey and Jim, no doubt, there's a
music still in our cheers,
But their eyes are "front" and their eyes are bright
with never a trace of tears —
And under the flags as they swing along with that
confident stride we like,
They come with the bearing of heroes, all — Abey
and Jimmy and Mike.

THE SWORD OF LIBERTY

LIFT thou the Sword, in glory bright,
Above the Field of Blood,
A Beacon in the fearful night,
Amid the crimson flood!
America, the God of Right
Has blessed a Cause for thee;
Wield thou, in all its holy might,
The Sword of Liberty.

Hold high the Sword, in Freedom's name,
That all the world may know
Its sacred mission and its flame
Strike terror to the foe!
America, thy strength divine
Shall break a despot's throne
And stir beyond the troubled Rhine
A love that is thine own.

Bear thou the Sword across the world
And let it sweep the main
Beside the Starry Flag, unfurled,
Till seas are safe again!
America, thy wondrous hands
The Lily, crushed, shall raise
And kindle in the mourning lands
The fires of peace and praise.

LAFAYETTE

ONE boy of twenty and one dream,
One ship, one loyal band,
One great ideal o'er all supreme,
One sword, one heart, one hand —
As Jason sowed the dragon's teeth
Along the fresh ploughed swell,
So on our fruitful land beneath
These seeds of Freedom fell.

From Jason's toil the armed men sprang,
In shining helm and shield,
And Jason's name on each lip rang
Across the furrowed field,
So now our fighting millions rise,
A magic "harvest home" —
A thousand ships of lordly size
Toss up the silver foam.

A "harvest home" of armored might,
Arrayed in splendor grand
It sweeps ahead to join the fight
And saves a stricken land.
One youth, one ship, one boyhood dream,
One impulse living yet!
And now — a sea of arms a-gleam —
Our "hosts of Lafayette."

WHAT IS THE LIBERTY LOAN?

IT'S forts and it's ships and it's shining guns. It's squadrons that sweep the sea. It's all of the circling band of steel that shall keep all the home shores free. It's grub and it's warmth for the sailor lad, far out on the wintry foam — for the brave jack tar, as he fights afar, it's the good old "Money from Home."

WHAT IS THE LIBERTY LOAN?

IT'S rifle and helm and it's bayonet, it's shovel and shard and shell, for the soldier boy in the olive drab, out there on the edge of hell. It's the soaring wings of the whirring planes that battle on high alone. For the lad who is daring "Over There," it's the good old "Money from Home."

WHAT IS THE LIBERTY LOAN?

IT'S succor and life for a bleeding world. It's the glimmer of Peace at dawn. It's the strength of a mighty arm to strike. It's the gleam of a great sword, drawn; but, more than all, it's a pledge of love to the lads whom we call "Our Own," to the boys on land, afloat, on high, it's the good old "Money from Home."

SILVER BILLOWS

OUT of the old cracked pitcher,
Out of the old wool sock,
From the depths of the feather mattress
And the dark nook behind the clock,
New England dollars are pouring
As they clang and tinkle and ring
In the stream of the nation's off'ring —
And this is the song they sing —

*Clink, clink, clink,
Tinkle, tinkle, clink,
Roll on, oh, silver billows,
On your shining bosom wide
Bearing all our precious legions
Onward to the battle tide,
Standard bearer, soldier, sailor,
All our host of fighting men;
Bear them safely, silver billows,
"Over there" and home again.*

Out of the vaults wealth laden,
Out of the well-filled tills,
From the Cræsus palaces lying
In the rear of the great bronze grills,
New England dollars are pouring
As they clang and tinkle and ring
In the stream of the nation's off'ring —
And this is the song they sing —

*Clink, clink, clink,
Tinkle, tinkle, clink,
Roll on, oh, silver billows, ^
On your shining bosom wide
 Bearing all our precious legions
Onward to the battle tide,
Standard bearer, soldier, sailor,
All our host of fighting men;
Bear them safely, silver billows,
 "Over there" and back again.*

LIGHTLESS

(Dedicated by one who frets at home to a soldier "Over There" who has lost his sight for us and for democracy.)

I MISS the dancing lights of town,
Their clustered cheer,
Complaining at the lamp, turned down,
The dim streets, drear,
The White Way darkened and its garish sights
Eclipsed and sobered on the "Lightless Nights."

He never more will see the sun,
The sheen of trees,
Or count the ripples, one by one,
Of shimmering seas —
But always groping on uncertain ways
Smiles, uncomplaining, on his Lightless Days.

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY

(The following poem was based on this thought from Lincoln's Gettysburg Address: "That we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain.")

AND these new windrows of the dead
Across new fields encrimsoned blown,
To what high purpose have they bled
Upon the altar of a throne?

Each mound the heart throb of a King,
Each soldier's gasp of fevered breath;
The measure Time ordains to bring
An age of monarchs nearer death.

To us who watch the lines dissolve
And melt amid the leaden rain;
Again there comes HIS high resolve,
"God grant they shall not die in vain."

COMRADE, let me clasp your hand!
Now the battle gods are calling
And the bugle notes are falling
Sweet and clear across the land;
Though this body halts with pain,
In my heart I hear them too, —
Comrade, I shall march with you
In a world grown young again.

Comrade, I have heard the hiss
Of the red Death's whispered greeting,
Known the steely shock of meeting
In the roar of times like this;
Though my step be lame and slow,
In my heart I'll charge with you,
Side by side we'll fight — we two —
I, in dreams of long ago.

Comrade mine of 'Seventeen,
Trail the battle gods to glory,
Write your chapter of the Story
On a new page, clear and clean;
Underneath the lurid sun
Of the battle lines — with you
I shall fight and conquer, too,
I, in dreams of 'Sixty-one.

CAN WE FACE HIM?

(If the Liberty Loan Fails)

SOMEWHERE along the battle line
A mud-grimed soldier dares his part
And wears above a loyal heart
A starry flag he holds divine.
By night, by day, though Death may ride
Beside him in the fearful hail,
He bravely breasts the doom-shot tide
And breathes "My Country" in his pride —
How can we face him if we fail?

Though other banners wave above
And other lands the fight may share
He holds his own beyond compare
And glories in his country love.
To fight for her alone, to die
If need be, that she may prevail —
A vision lights his weary eye,
The vision of her flag on high —
How can we face him if we fail?

What have we then that we can give
So precious in this great world strife,
That we can balance it with life,
To let him die that we may live?
To urge him on to heed the call,
To pray his strength may us avail,
To cheer him through the smoky pall
And giving nothing, ask his all? —
How can we face him if we fail?

OUR MESSAGE TO BELGIUM

August, 1914-1917

ONCE again the August sunshine
 Gleams upon the harvest there,
Once again war's crimson glory
 Flashes on the Summer air;
All along that awful pathway,
 Inland from the North Sea's foam,
Through the blood-red battle breakers,
 We shall lead you home.

Now the foes' gray tide receding
 Leaves its mark upon the land,
Blackened home and ravished city,
 Cratered field and scarlet sand.
Back along the fringe of carnage,
 Where the hosts of death still roam
Fearing nothing, pressing onward,
 We shall lead you home.

Home again to peaceful rivers
 By your heroes' life-blood dyed.
Home again new fires to kindle
 On a quiet country side,
Back along your path of valor,
 O'er the weirdly 'richened loam,
With our star-lit flag above you,
 We shall lead you home.

THE FLAG'S BIRTHDAY

FOREVER new, despite its ancient story,
Forever young, through all its hallowed years,
Forever mighty in its breeze-swept glory,
Forever smiling through a Nation's tears:

Flag of all flags — its brave and tender meaning
Shines in each deep and battle-honored scar,
Pure as the heavens its flowing folds are screening,
Bright as each glowing flame-refulgent star.

Forever true, in stanch and knightly beauty,
Forever free, to all the world flung wide,
Forever bravest in the fight of duty,
Forever proud, though taunting foes deride.

Flag of all flags — above, its rippled beaming,
Blazing on high in freedom's purest ray,
Waves o'er the Sword, unsheathed, with vict'ry
gleaming,
War-tossed and love-blessed on its Natal Day.

THE GOOD OLD PRICES

SOMETIMES the price of things goes up and up
and up,
And all that life appears to hold is dregs within the
cup.
I find a solace sweet and sure, no matter then how
sick
My heart may be, in looking through my boy's
arithmetic.

With eager eye I turn again the well-thumbed pages
o'er
To find he does the problems that I did in days of
yore.
"If Mr. Smith had eighteen bucks," demands a
knotty one,
"How much good coal could Smithy buy at just
four bucks per ton?"

And when the rush of bills and such have nicked
me in the neck,
I find the one that runs like this: "At twenty cents
a peck,
How many spuds, in bushels, please, were sent to
Mr. Jones,
Who took into the grocery store exactly seven
bones?"

“When beans are just six cents a quart — and beef
ten cents a pound,”

I gloat again upon these facts until my head goes
round,

And once again I’m wafted back into my boyhood
days

And see the Golden Age again right through the
High Cost haze.

For though these other things may change and rise
through all the years

Until the thought of buying food brings only bitter
tears,

There’s one place that the good old days just hang
around and stick —

They have n’t boosted prices in the kid’s arithmetic.

OCCASIONAL POEMS

MY FLAG

OTHER flags have dipped in blood,
Youth has kissed their folds and died,
While, above the battle flood,
Watched the women tender-eyed;
Other flags, snatched to the skies,
Christened in the crimson wine,
Other flags — before my eyes
Floats but one, O Flag of Mine.

Youth with faith, serene and sweet
As the love a baby holds,
Marching on with steadfast feet,
Underneath their rippling folds,
Holding them as things apart
Set in manhood's inmost shrine,
Other flags — within my heart
Reigns but one, O Flag of Mine.

Flag of Mine, with stripe and star,
Glorified, unsullied, pure,
Best beloved of all you are,
On the heights, alone, secure;
Come what may of peace or strife
Never shall your folds entwine
Other flags — in death or life,
One, alone, O Flag of Mine.

THE YOUNG MEN

Gettysburg, 1863-1913

WE were the Young Men then —
Flower of the patient Northland,
Flower of the fiery Southland,
We were the Young Men then —
Looking on death with a laugh in the Chance of the
 leaden Gamble,
Breathing the smoke of the Fight and the reek of the
 Angle's shamble,
Gray in lines swept by the hail from the hills and
 broken asunder,
Blue in the ranks standing fast and stanch, there in
 the Ridge's thunder —

*We were the Young Men then —
Flower of the North, my comrade,
Flower of the South, my comrade —
We were the Young Men then.*

We were the Young Men then —
Flower of our cherished Homeland,
Flower of our fathers' Homeland, —
We were the Young Men then.
Swiftly the years file by with the measured tread of
 the Ages,
We who could laugh in the face of Death, faltering
 gray-haired Sages,

March to the Call again, gaze o'er the grim, hal-
low'd field and ponder.

What all our Fifty Years have gained, they lost,
'neath the white stones yonder —

*We were the Young Men then —
Comrade, beneath the lilies,
Foeman, beneath the lilies,
We were the Young Men then.*

CHUCKING A REPROBATE

Farewell to 1914

OUR hands are on your collar, no use to grip your
chair;
No use to plead with us to mark your white and
snowy hair;
For we know your bloody record now beyond all
shade of doubt,
And though the night be cold and drear we're going
to throw you out.

*For you've been a cold, bold year
With your swords and guns and battles;
You've been a bold, cold year
With your death gurgles and rattles.
We'll heave you on the highway,
We will pitch you through the door,
Out upon the old, cold by-way,
Of the bad years gone before.*

When first you came among us all your manners
were quite mild,
You tripped the flowery hills of spring as harmless
as a child;
But as your head grew gray and wise beneath the
summer suns,
You spoke in grim, gruff monotones as of a million
guns.

*For you've been a tough, rough year,
And your eyes are shot and bleary;
You've been a rough, tough year,
With your mutterings we're weary.
We've stood your bluff and bluster,
Now it's turn and turn about;
We're proceeding without fluster,
And we're going to turn you out.*

You're a hoary headed reprobate who's worn a welcome bare,
Your beard is spiked with bayonets and gunsmoke wreathes your hair;
Now while you sit and grin and gloat o'er suffering mortals' tears,
We're going to heave you on your head out with the old bad years.

*For you've been a bad, mad year,
And your gnarled old hands are gory;
You've been a mad, bad year,
With your tale of blood and glory.
Our left hand's on your collar,
Our right's upon your pants;
You can yell and scream and holler,
But you have n't got a chance.*

THE SPIRIT OF VICTORY

HE'S only ten and his tousled head
Echoes the gold of the April sun —
Gripping them both 'til he goes to bed,
His baseball bat and his trusty gun.

He marches along with sturdy stride
Over the meadows and through the street,
Ready for all that may betide
The sternest foe that his path may meet.

Strife of the diamond, war's grim work
Falling alike to his sunburned hand,
His not the heart of a slacker-shirk,
Leading to battle his trusty band.

Give us the heart of that ten-year-old,
Lighter the tasks that must soon be done —
The ready strength of those hands that hold
The baseball bat and the trusty gun.

THE FOOTBALL PLAYER

YOUR autumn armor girds you 'round
From cleated shoon to leathern helm,
Your thund'ring rushes scar the ground
'Twixt lime-lined borders of your realm;
'Gainst wearing rack,
For sharp attack,
Swift forrays, 'neath the spheroids flight —
'Gainst jarring knock
And brushing shock
You stand a well-accoutred knight.

Your pliant sinews scorn the strain
Of wind-swift tackles' swooping clasp;
Your shoulders carve the yawning lane,
Your high knees tear the frantic grasp;
Or waiting low
The rushing foe,
Your steel arms tighten, left on right;
Torn free away
Or sore at bay
You roam a strong and sturdy knight.

Revered tradition holds you true
And blazes all your rugged way,
As did the heart the Douglas threw
Into the turmoil of the fray;

And striking square
And hard and fair
You cleave your way with main and might;
Nor yield an inch
Nor foul nor flinch
But strive as best becomes a knight.

IF I WERE —

IF I were Robert Chambers — well
I'll bet I'd write the stuff to sell;
I'd write of men in evening dress,
And ladies in a little less —
Until the public cried, "Gee whizz,
How warm that stuff of Chambers' is."

If I were F. P. A., I wot
I'd translate Latin with a trot
And shoot that fluff for days and days
In ultra-modern paraphrase,
Until the high-brow bunch would say,
"Some clever bloke, that F. P. A."

If I were Monty Glass — say, kid,
I guess I could n't sling the Yidd —
I'd write of "bibble" and of "ish,"
Pfannkucken and gefullte-fische,
"Believe me, Mawruss," you would cry,
"He's got it class, that writer guy."

If I were only Bernard Shaw,
My stuff at times would be quite raw;
But I, of course, would have to pan
The foibles of my fellow man,
And when the prudent felt the sting
They'd sneer, "This Shaw knows everything."

If I were only Teddy R.
I'd box and wrestle, ride and spar,
And sign my bold, historic name
To crates and crates of tropic game;
My gentle readers would declare,
"Our Teddy knows, for he was there."

In fact, I often stop to think,
If I were any other gink
Besides the author of this col —
Compiler of this fol-de-rol —
How nice 't would be to overhear —
"He grabs off fifty thou per year."

SNOW

I KNOW a bleak unlovely plain,
A dismal stretch of weed and sand,
Where Desolation's horrors reign,
Severe and grim on every hand.

The shrill winds whistled through the night;
The great drifts eddied here and there
And buried deep and out of sight
My well-trimmed walks and gardens fair.

And now I look across the snows —
A sea of sparkling diadems,
A garden white, wherein there glows
A myriad of precious gems.

The dreary plain must stretch away
Beyond the borders of my plot,
And yet it shimmers back to-day
As dazzling white as Camelot.

There, where the drifts in billows swell,
And border line with border blends,
I know and yet I cannot tell
Where waste begins and garden ends.

And so I wot, were we to see
Some bleak unlovely lives we know
Through eyes of perfect charity
Our careful border lines would go —
The Thee and Me and Me and Thee
Quite buried as in dazzling snow.

A CITY WATCHER

UPON the chasms of the town
The winter twilight closes in,
The ev'ning draws her mantle down
Upon the dusty, noisy din;
I press my face against the glass
And peer above the buildings high
To where the moon-tipped cloudlets pass
Across my strip of starry sky.

A little strip of star and cloud —
It stretches high above the street,
So far above the jostling crowd
And noisy tread of rushing feet,
So far away from where I peer
Out through my smudgy window-pane;
And yet, I fancy, there I hear
The bells and see the reindeer train.

And so I watch there every night
When all about the room is still;
Before they bring the supper light;
I lean my elbows on the sill,
And watch the racing cloudlets go —
The reindeer cloudlets that I see,
And wonder if St. Nick will know
The boy who's looking up is me.

A TOAST TO THE MANY

YOU have drunk to the line of your heroes
That sprang when the world began;
You have raised to its kingly station
The name of the Man-who-can;
You have crowned him with bay and laurel,
You have echoed the ancient boast,
And now while the wine is with us
I'll pledge you another toast.

You have drunk to the feet that are fleetest,
The might of a strong right arm,
To the courage that answers boldly
The shock of the quick alarm;
And so ever your glasses clinking,
You have shouted a Victor's name
And sung in your ringing measures
The tale of a Winner's fame.

I would pledge you the wondrous visions
The blind man's eyes must see;
I would drink to the deaf man's fancy
Of a bird's song, ringing free,
To the dream of a crippled soldier
With his flag-love never dim,
To the runner's heart that beats to
The limp of a withered limb.

I would pledge you the hands that fumble,
The brain that is dull and slow;
I would drink to old age that's dreaming
The dreams that youth should know.
To the few? Of course, if you pledge them
Who nestle in Fortune's lap;
To the thousands, too, who are bearing
The weight of the Handicap.

You have drunk to the line of your heroes
That sprang when the world began,
To the nerve and brawn and the muscle,
And the fame of the Man-who-can.
But now while your cheers are loudest,
And loudest the Victor's chant,
I would pledge you in deeper earnest
A health to the Man-who-can't.

THE MASTER DRIVER

HIS lash is on our shoulders, his taunts are in our ears;

He goads us when we stumble, he plies his whip and jeers.

Oh, Driver, Master Driver, pause ere it is too late,
Lest we shall turn and show thee the fury of our hate.

Rock strewn, the course that stretches across the noonday heat,

Our backs are sore with striving and torn and scarred our feet.

Oh, Driver, Master Driver, withhold the lash ye must!

Lest we shall wrest it from thee and fling it in the dust.

Beside the stony pathway we see the shady bowers,
Sweet rest for pain-racked bodies amid the pleasant flowers.

Oh, Driver, Master Driver, a moment would we stop;

A moment only, Master, this boon or else we drop.

And now the course lies upward o'er gloomy ledge and crag,

And still the whip is on us, he curses when we lag.

Oh, Driver, Master Driver, the hilltop rises high,
Fain we would loose our burden and lie down here to die.

A moment, super-human; the hot tears dim our
eyes!

And then, oh, dream and glory! we reach and clutch
the prize.

Oh, Driver, Master Driver, beneath whose lash
we've bled,

We bow the knee before thee, we kiss the ground
you tread.

AND THEN WHAT?

MOULDERS of novels and builders of books,
Learn'd literati so mighty,
Lords of the pens that run on like the brooks,
Fanciful geniuses flighty —
Over the planet in devious ways,
Weave ye your wonderful dream plots —
Hollow your measure of silver and praise
'Til ye have met the "And-Then-Whats."

The little boy was very poor,
For folks and home he had not.
And so upon a lonely moor
He tended sheep —
(*Chorus*) "AND THEN WHAT?"

Well, one day while he watched the sheep
That grazed across the great lot,
Beneath a tree he fell asleep,
Yes, quite asleep —
(*Chorus*) "AND THEN WHAT?"

Well, while he slept a giant came
With bludgeon, sword, and top-knot;
He shook the boy and called his name
And woke him up —
(*Chorus*) "AND THEN WHAT?"

Writers of volumes and tellers of tales,
Authors of treatise and story,
Delvers in history, lifters of veils,
Winners of gold and of glory,
Fight ye your battles for name and for place,
Slaves of the lamp and the ink-pot,
Where shall ye win that which lights up that face
Or breathes in that whispered "And Then What?"

A DADDY TO HIS REAL VALENTINE

MAID of chubby hands so tender,
Maid of curls of sunlit splendor,
Maid of laughing lips and eyes,
Playful eyes with mischief teeming,
Trustful eyes with true love beaming,
Eyes of wonder, fairy wise —
When I hear your footsteps patter,
Down the hall, a tiny clatter,
Then this bounding heart of mine,
With a measured throbbing's beating,
Just a wistful, questioned greeting —
Maid of sunny smiles divine,
“Are n't you Daddy's Valentine?”

THAT BOY

HE stands before me as I write;
I look into his fearless eyes,
Eyes that are clear and calm and bright,
Filled with the solemn trust I prize —
Sturdy and straight, he is, of limb,
Of shoulders square and lithe of frame —
I wonder what I bring to him
Of strength and power to Play the Game.

For though we battle in the sun,
On Big League field or Bush League lot;
The mighty Games we might have won,
The Strike-out's sting, the Error's blot,
All scrawled across the Scorer's sheet
Obscure the things for which we strive —
A record sad of stumbling feet
To place before a boy of five.

And yet, e'er in the Final Score
We write our Totals line by line,
The things we've learned may count us more
Than those we've gained by margin fine.
And where we've Booted every Chance
And Swung too late or Hurled too wide —
Our faults may teach him at a glance
And he may Win where we've but Tried.

THANKSGIVING EXILES

IN the room of mocking laughter,
Empty song and hollow jest,
'Mid the ghosts of fine beginnings,
Long dead hope and wearied zest —
On the smoke wisps, lazy-lying,
In the ghastly, tinted glow,
Blazes forth again the Vision —
Home, Sweet Home, of long ago.

Years that cloud the clearer reason,
Years that dry the better tears,
Life that blunts the finer feelings,
Life that laughs at hopes and fears —
All of this in mocking revel
Drowns the self-accusing cry,
Choking back the dearer mem'ries
With the bitter question, "Why?"

All around the ghostly laughter,
Careworn, careless, ribald play —
Wraiths of countless old Thanksgivings
Rising in the weary way —
Thankful we for twisted courses?
Thankful we for bruise and blow?
Nay, alone we hold the Vision —
Giving thanks for Long Ago.

THE TROUT BROOK

SPLASHING on the cold smooth stones
In mysterious undertones;
Singing in the brush that hedges
Pools and rills and little ledges;
Roaring in the cool ravine,
Eddying in a change of scene,
Through the half-ploughed meadow land;
Dancing gaily on the sand,
Echoing in woods again,
Like the swishing of the rain;
Gurgling, singing, dancing, splashing,
Onward, downward ever dashing,
Now it's murmuring almost sadly,
Now it's gurgling onward gladly
And it's song that's ever changing
In a thousand keys a-ranging
Needs but one small voice to break it,
One swift monotone to make it
Sweeter than the sweetest bells
With the music that it tells,
As you hear the tick-tick-ticking
Of your trusty reel, whose clicking
Speaks another silent battle
In the roaring and the rattle
Of the ever-singing brook
Till you've "got him" safely, surely, "on
the hook."

TO GOLF — A TOAST

BORN by the Highland heather,
Nurtured in mountain dew,
Careless of wind or of weather,
Hardy and brave and true,
Forever waiting and ready,
With a charm that's always the same —
A health — every hand now steady —
A health to the Grand Old Game.

To the outward journey o'er hill and vale,
Where the fair green stretches straight ahead;
To the drive that sings over dune and dale
And the mashie shot when the ball drops dead;
To the brassie lies we all have had;
To the hazards we've cleared and the ones we've
found;
To the game we've played when our luck was bad,
To the records we break when our luck is sound.

To the homeward journey in sunset glow,
To the greens we have never tried nor seen,
To the course that few of us really know,
To the wish that our eyes may prove as keen
As they were in the battles we used to fight
When the ball shot out from our iron's face
Like a bullet straight on its onward flight,
To the form we'll lose with grudging grace.

To the nineteenth green — let your glasses clink —
Wherever it is, by mountain or sea.
Let us take it clean and the health we drink
Let it echo out in the night air free,
Like a slogan that startles the highland hills,
Or the magic sound of a mighty name.
A health — a health with a thousand thrills,
A health, one and all to the Grand Old Game.

Born where the salt winds whistle
The heathered hills among,
In the far-off land of the thistle,
It's old, but it's ever young.
So drink it — ye duffers — drink it,
A toast to its mighty name,
Fore! Now as our glasses clink it,
A health to the Grand Old Game.

TO THE SOLDIERS OF FIFTY YEARS
AGO

1863

A HURRIED march o'er the trodden meadows,
Under the trees torn bare in the shrapnel's rain;
Over the sod crushed down by the Trampling
Legions,
Into the scorching Breath of Death again.
On where the smoke clouds ebb and eddy,
Rising and falling in grim design;
Marking across the hail-swept valley,
A Gray Foe's far-flung Skirmish Line.

1913

A halting march by the silent river;
Under the trees, full blown in their spring array,
Over the sod untracked by the Peaceful Legions,
Sweet with the soft warm Breath of Life and May—
On with the ranks forever closing,
On where the rose and laurel entwine,
Facing now o'er the still stream's border
A Gray Foe's hidden Skirmish Line.

BASEBALL POEMS



TO TIMOTHY H. MURNANE

PACK up his bats, pick up his glove,
For him the Game is done;
At last the stars peep out above
The setting of the sun.
Once more the field, serene at night,
Is still, and hushed the shout.
The Presence chokes us as we write
Just this: "He ran it out."

Above the plate Time held the ball:
He turned the last gray bag
With stride that weakened not at all.
His spirit did not lag,
But proudly Homeward bound he sped,
Nor feared the final rout.
High flung at last the silver'd head,
Unbowed "he ran it out."

LOOKING BACKWARD AND FORWARD

I

THE great stand's massive horseshoe towers
And casts its shadow o'er the field,
The clean-cut base paths carve the sward,
An emerald diamond on a shield;
 Across the glossy sheen —
 The verdant stretching green —
 Lazy, the bleachers rise,
 Gaunt frames against the skies.
 Daily I labor here,
 Labor to cry and cheer,
 Closing my eyes, look back
 Along the winding track,
And see, dim set there in the year's gray haze,
The tree-fringed diamond of my boyhood days.

2

The maple trees that lined the road,
The meadow stretching to the stream;
The deep worn sunken pitcher's box,
Each measured white stone base a-gleam,
 Planted at ev'ry turn,
 Your bare, bruised feet to burn;
 There in the evening's cool
 Respite from field or school,
 Sacred to Saturday's
 Scroll of tremendous frays;
 There where the hills looked down,
 Guarding the nestling town,
First came the Vision, pointing out the way,
The dream of Big League diamonds far away.

SOME WORLD — AT TIMES

IT'S a great little world, bo. Ain't it that?
With its mornin's so bright and its evenin's so cool
An' y' got all yer troubles jus' pinned to th' mat,
So you kind o' forget that it ever was crool.
It's a great little world, pal, take it from me.
An' y' feel jus' like jumpin' aroun' like a kitten
When yer poundin' the ball fer aroun' three-thirty-
three.
It's a great little world — when yer hittin'.

It's a great little game, bo. Ain't it that?
With its ups an' its downs an' its pinches an' such
When y' knows that y' got that ol' blow in yer bat
An' y' don't care if pitchers has little er much.
It's a great little world, pal, y' can believe,
When yer gettin' a-hold till the fences are splittin'
When y' got that ol' wallop jus' hid up yer sleeve.
It's a great little world — when yer hittin'.

It's a gloomy ol' world, bo. Ain't it that?
When yer swingin' so hearty with never a hit,
When th' pitcher's jus' flingin' 'em up like a gat
An' wotever y' meet goes kerplunk in a mitt;
It's a great little world, though all th' way roun'.
Full o' bright happy hours that are fleetin' and flit-
tin'
When yer knockin' yer enemies off'n th' moun'.
It's a great little world — when yer hittin'.

It's a gloomy ol' world, bo, gloomy and gray,
When yer pluggin' along in a half-hearted way,
When y' knows y' ain't got yer ol' min' on yer
knittin' —

But

It's a great little world — when yer hittin'.

“FER TO ADMIRE”

(A Spring Fever Idyl)

(A. to R. K. once more)

TH' bleacher crowd jes' sets an' smiles
An' stretches, lazy as kin be;
While roun' th' field fer miles an' miles
It's run an' sweat an' work fer me.
M' legs is tired, m' arm is lame,
I guess I'm done fer good an' all;
An' 'mid the chatter of the game,
Th' empire drones, "Come on, play ball."

*Fer to admire an' fer to see,
Fer to git panned on ev'ry side —
This game it ain't no good to me,
But I can't quit it if I tried!*

I sees th' ladies in the stan's,
All decked in red an' green an' blue.
I lamps th' moguls shakin' han's
A-smokin' an' a-jokin' too. |
An' then m' cap down on m' eyes
I pulls an' blinks up at th' sun,
An' hears th' far-off cheerin' rise
An' wishes that th' game was done.

Dere's bankers and dere's lawyers there
An' bus'ness guys an' doctors too,
All drinkin' in the warm spring air —
They ain't got nawthin' else to do.

An' when I thinks th' cinch they got,
Jes' watchin' me an' all m' pals
All chasin' roun' a bloomin' lot,
Th' old blue feelin' in me swells.

I wish I had a little shop,
Er drove a team er sailed a ship,
Instid of pluggin' till I drop
An' takin' all th' boss's lip;
Dere's nawthin' else but hit an' run
An' slide th' skin all off yer gams,
An' makin' out it's so much fun,
Jes' like a bunch of blasted lambs.

*Fer to admire an' fer to see,
Fer to git panned on ev'ry side —
This game it ain't no good to me,
But I can't quit it if I tried!*

THE FLINGING WHIP

AGES and ages ago, when the tunes of the Pipes of
Pan
Echoed afar and across the breadth of a shaggy
world,
When o'er the wooded hills the nimble cave men
ran,
Sought out their mortal foes and their flint-tipped
spear shafts hurled —
Then by the evening fires the Bards of the Caverns
sang —
And the tales of the Mighty Men echoed on every
lip
Till the shadowy depths of the forest rang
With the old, old song of the Flinging Whip.

*Arm that is steady, arm that is true,
Backed by a heart that is unafraid;
Arm that is tireless the long fight through —
Symbol of power since the world was made.*

Spear tips and lance heads of old found in the
muddy Nile,
Boomerangs, bolos and slings borne from the jungle
wild,
Brought o'er the Seven Seas from some far-off
sunny Isle —
Javelins long, long ago, the toys of some Spartan
child —

E'en from the frozen North and its dreary stretches,
 where
In the depths of the lonely seas the sliding glaciers
 dip
And the Eskimo hunts for the Polar Bear —
Comes the old, old song of the Flinging Whip.

*Arm that is steady, arm that is true,
Arm that is sure and sturdy and sound,
Arm that will last nine innings through —
Symbol of power the world around.*

THE OLD TRAINER

I SITS alone upon the bench
An' leans my elbows on my knees
An' looks away across the field
Far to its fringe of buddin' trees.
An' all around me, bare of limb,
An' bare of arm, an' far an' near,
I sees my boys at work agin
Jus' as I have these twenty year.

*For Life is like the great wide field
Where we work and toil and run our race,
Where the strong ones win and the weak ones
yield
And we sweat in the heat of the driving pace.*

I sees the sprinter's nervous stride,
His high-flung knees, his fighting face;
The distance runner's easy swing,
The hurdler's graceful loping pace,
An' up an' down the cinder path
The awkward lurch, the faultless style,
An' searches out the heart to stand
The cruel flash of the quarter mile.

*Yes, Life is a quarter-mile's fearful grind,
A scramble hard from the starting gun,
With devil a chance if you lag behind,
An' a heart that bursts when the race is done.*

I've seen them come these twenty year,
An' seen them win or lose and go;
I've seen the young ones, fast and strong,
An' watched the old ones getting slow.
An' some that won, I've found it hard
To shake their hand and praise their part,
An' some have lost, but losing still
Have found th' soft place in my heart.

*For Life goes like a long cross-country run,
An' we sets and watches it day by day,
While the runners, passing us one by one,
Race over the hills and far away.*

I mind the first spiked shoes I wore
When I was nothin' but a lad,
'T is more than thirty years ago;
Yet all the joys I ever had
Began with them, and now I think
The day I won my first great race
How like these boys of mine I was —
Yet see these wrinkles in my face.

*For Life is a race, and we run it well,
Or we lag behind and we pant and blow;
Yet sooner or later we hear the bell
That tells us we've only one lap to go.*

THE BOY AND THE DREAM

WAIF of the reeking streets, dust-spattered, thin,
With cap aslant upon brave, wistful eyes,
And piping voice that rings above the din
Its warning call against the law's surprise;
Knight of the great Black Glove so deftly turned,
Master so soon of sweeping curve and speed —
Tell us with what great Dream your soul has
 burned,
To what Far Goal your Hopes and Visions lead.

Yet, watching, do we note the Johnson pose,
Two ragged arms stretched high, a bosom swelled,
Then quickly shifting to a tense repose;
Two grime-stained hands against your jacket
 held —
And then the hurl, the step, the follow through:
Keen, anxious eyes that peer along the flight,
A glimpse of Walsh, of Wood and Matty too,
All blending in the swift descending right.

Waif of the dusty streets, we know your Dream —
Across the years there sounds the Bleachers' roar,
Across the years the Big League standards gleam,
Across the years one Name and nothing more —
Your name, my lad, sharp called above the Fray:
Your Name, my boy, far roll'd o'er many Fields,
Your Dream, we said, yet, plodding day by day,
Our own until they lay us on our Shields.

THE CALL TO ARMS

VON MACKENSEN was wounded,
Von Hindenburg had gout,
Von Kluck had stopped some shrapnel
That nearly knocked him out.
Across the Kaiser's visage
Ran dark despair and dread,
"It's über alles mit uns,
"We're ausgetrimmed," he said.

"Oh, Rotterdam and Potsdam,
Oh, Amsterdam," cursed he;
"Oh, dam these three von generals,
They've fallen down on me."
And sounds of kingly sobbing
Went from that place heraus,
Until a noble queried:
"Is Wagner in the house?"

A smile lit up the Kaiser,
He smote his knee and swore,
"I'm dummer in der kopfe
Why ain't I thought before?
Bring hither mighty Honus
From Pittsburgh o'er the sea!
An Iron Cross for Honus,
And three long 'hochs' for me."

So from the fortified harbor
The submarines set out,
To bring back Hans the mighty,
And stem the allied rout.

Gray-headed, grim, they found him,
Rampaging like a Krupp,
Still busting down the fences
And busting ball games up.

“Come mit uns, Herr von Vogner,
Der Kaiser says, come home;
Der submarine is waiting
Beneath the ocean’s foam.”
But Honus shook his noodle,
And turned a careless ear
And said, “Go tell der Kaiser
Ich bin ein Pirate here.”

We’re neutral here in Boston,
Except upon the green,
Upon the grassy diamond,
Where deeds of might are seen.
We give three hochs for Honus,
We like his Pirate ways
But it’s Pittsburgh über alles
As long as Honus stays.

It’s Pittsburgh über alles
As long as Honus waves
His many-bingled bludgeon
Before our startled Braves.
That’s why we hoch der Kaiser,
And hope within our dome
That when he needs *good* Pirates’
He’ll yank this Dutchman home.

THAT PENNANT

FLING it out to the breeze, old scouts;
Break out each flutt'ring fold;
The Flag of a Hundred Winning Bouts,
The Sign of Hearts that told;
Hoist it above to the half-heard cheer,
Flaunt it where Hope has dropped,
Point where it spells your Title clear,
The Right of the Guys that Copped.

*Sloughed in the ruck,
Gripped by the luck,
Beaten and hindered but never stopped;
The Ghost of a bragging Boast of a Flag
Spurring you on where others might lag —
And the Pride of the Guys that Copped.*

Fling it out and against the sky
And let it ride the gale,
A silken emblem floating high
Above a thorny Trail;
Hold it aloft where all may see
And read its legend bright,
A flag that boasts as heraldry
The Scroll of a Winning Fight.

*Battered and torn,
Weary and worn,
Holding the course through a darksome night —
Still being the flash of the sharp, swift dash,
The start of the first real Forward smash;
And the Punch of the Winning Fight.*

Fling it out to the chilling gust
And let it be a Boast,
The Sign of a well-remembered Trust,
The Badge of a Fighting Host;
And though you tread the harder way,
And battle where Faith has flopped,
Follow through all the bitter Fray,
The Flag of the Guys that Copped.

*Sloughed in the ruck,
Gripped by the luck,
Battered and beaten but never stopped —
Still holding the ways of the other days,
The paths of Glory and pomp and praise —
With the Pride of the Guys that Copped.*

“WOT’S D’ SCORE”

GEE, but yer lookin’ swell, mister,
Drivin’ yer great big car,
An’ settin’ back like a bloomin’ king
A-smokin’ a fat cigar!
I bet you blowed, to-day, mister,
A couple o’ casers an’ more;
But I ain’t lookin’ fer coin, mister,
I’m askin’ y’ “Wot’s d’ score?”

*Wot’s d’ score? Wot’s d’ score?
Y’ kin shoot it goin’ by;
Wot’s d’ score? Wot’s d’ score?
I kin grab it on d’ fly.
Y’ won’t have to slow a bit, mister —
Say, y’ need n’t look sore,
Cos I ain’t beggin’ a cent, mister;
I’m askin’ y’ “Wot’s d’ score?”*

I asks me dad fer a two-bit piece,
An’ he gives me d’ icy stare,
An’ I tries to borry it from me frien’s,
An’ fer once me frien’s ain’t dere.
I climbs in over the fence, mister,
But d’ cop puts up a roar;
So dat’s why I’m here in d’ cold, mister,
An’ askin’ y’ “Wot’s d’ score?”

*Wot’s d’ score? Wot’s d’ score?
(I guess dis guy is deaf);
Wot’s d’ score? Wot’s d’ score?
(Er he’s stingy with his brea’f).*

*I ain't askin' no dough, mister,
Y' ain't no call to get sore;
I'm talkin' jes' as polite as I kin
An' askin' y' "Wot's d' score?"*

He's only a ragged youngster,
And he's rather fresh, you say;
Or perhaps your mind is busy
Figuring out a play.
But you've seen the game, and he has n't,
And his heart is mighty sore,
And it's a brave little voice that pipes so loud
"Jes' askin' y' 'Wot's d' score?'"

*Wot's d' score? Wot's d' score?
You hear it every day;
Wot's d' score? Wot's d' score?
A plaintive little lay.
It does n't cost much for an answer,
A couple of breaths — no more;
But they're surely worth a smile apiece
To the kid with his "Wot's d' score?"*



THE RETURN OF THE FAITHFUL

BACK here on the bleachers, bo,
Settin' in the sun?
Back here on the bleachers, pal,
Waitin' for the fun?
Hocked yer winter overcoat?
Put yer job in soak?
Don't see what's a-makin' you
Such a happy bloke.

*Zing! Zing! it's the same old smoke,
With its hop, ol' top, and the same ol' drop,
Did ye pipe where that fast one broke?
Zowie! police! Say, did he hit that ball?
Well, take it from me he did;
He's the guy with the eye that they never get by,
The little, ol', murderin' kid.*

Back here on the bleachers, bo,
Settin' in the sun?
Back here on the bleachers, pal,
Waitin' for the fun?
Shiver in the wind, ol' scout?
Makes — no, never mind.
Hot enough a-callin' down
Umpires that is blind.

*Bing! bang! Get them outfield guys a hack,
Fer it's swing and bing, while they sizzle and sing,
And a lot of 'em never comes back —
Come on! come on! keep a-comin' in, ol' boy!*



*That 's the way to put on the steam;
Fer it 's pep, are y' hep, that 's give y' yer rep,
You little, ol', murderin' team.*

Back here on the bleachers, bo,
Settin' in the sun?
Back here on the bleachers, pal,
Waitin' for the fun?
Lemme shake yer mitt, ol' scout;
Jus' slip me yer fin;
Here's the dreary days that 's gone —
Good ones comin' in.

ABE POTASH ON SUMMER

(Apologies to M. Glass)

BELIEVE me, I ain't making no kick, y' understand me;

I ain't yet that kind of a low life bummer
Which he is got to go round with an axe so handy
And making it knocks that there ain't no summer
And spoiling it trade, but there's winters I've seen
it

Which is got days that ain't so chilly
As these here days when the Grass's so green it
Looks just like them suits we sell Sachs in Philly;
And I goes by ball games and sits and hollers
And makes it those sounds us rooters gives vent
to —

I've shivered all spring and what is it follers?
Sure it's summer, Mawruss, but where is it went to?

THE CHAMPION

THE Champion's way is the way of power,
Of strength and courage and might,
Of nerve that told in a crucial hour,
Proved true in a gruelling fight;
And his bludgeon flashes above the fray
As clean as a broadsword's blade,
And he strides the field in the haughty way
Of youth that is unafraid.

PLAY BALL —

*Come, boys, who's the batter?
Hark! above the bleachers' roar
Voices shrill and hoarse once more
Hear the infield's chatter —
 Winter sloth that flies again,
 Pennant hopes that rise again,
 Summer in the skies again —
Come, boys, who's the batter?*

The Champion's way is a stony path,
With no one to call him friend,
And naught to meet but a loser's wrath
Through the whole league and to end;
But he bides his time with a sturdy heart
With the glint of steel in his eye,
And he scorns the hand that would take his part
And welcomes the battle cry.

PLAY BALL —

*Come, boys, who's the batter?
On the paths from base to base,
Kicked by flying feet that race,
See the dust puffs spatter,
 Gleaming spikes that flash again,
 Crashing smash of ash again,
 Old-time foes that clash again —
Come, boys, who's the batter?*

The Champion's way is the way of pride
And his goal is his title clear
That his pennon bold on his spear may ride
With never a blot or smear;
Nor yet content with the combats won,
Nor seeking rest from the fray,
But leading the fight from sun to sun,
A champion all the way.

PLAY BALL —

*Come, boys, who's the batter?
Hark! above the bleachers' roar
Voices shrill and hoarse once more
Hear the infield's chatter —
 Old-time friends that meet again,
 Throbbing hearts that beat again
 With the thrill that's sweet again —
Come, boys, who's the batter?*

AN OLD STORY

(More or less by Request of a New "Martyr")

SUMMER girls there are a-plenty
Doubtless you could name me twenty
Girls who motor, golf and sail their yachtlets over
 all the summer seas,
Girls who sun themselves on beaches,
Nut-brown maids, piazza peaches —
Girls who grace old-fashioned hammocks under-
 neath th' old apple trees;
But you do not know them all,
Plain or pretty, short or tall,
Till you've listened to them chatter at a Big League
 game of ball: —

(Chorus)

Why do they call him a short stop? What d' ye
 mean — a hit?
Why do they have two umpires? Is that what you
 call a mitt?
How old is that Mr. Speaker? Oh, is n't Carrigan
 cute?
If that's what you call a regular Curve, then why
 do they say a shoot?
What — did the catcher steal second? Does every
 one have to bat?
I went to lots of the games last year — where do
 you s'pose I sat?

Is that man a regular player? Gracious he looks too small!

Say, which do you like the best, dancing or watching a game of ball?

We will not print the answers of the cross-examined man —

Suffice to say he does explain as best becomes a fan ;
For how can man lie better, as the wise Macaulay wrote,

Than to the artless, winsome miss who thusly “gets his goat”?

“HARVARDYALEWOCKY”

(As it May Be)

T WAS brickley and the edmahans
Did mills and storer like a lion,
All hardwick were the donovans
And the reXHitchcock obrien.

Beware the ketchamjones, my son,
The bulldog jaws that snap and crack;
Beware the hefflefinger, shun
The bully johnnymack.

He took his haughton sword in hand,
Long time the hinkey foe he sought,
Then rested he by a tedcoy tree
And stood awhile in thought.

And while a gallauer thought he did
The ketchamjones, with eyes aflame,
Pumpelleyed up the markle grid
And cornished as he came.

One, two, one, two, and through and through
The haughton sword went snickersnack;
He left it dead and with its head
He percywendelled back.

And hast thou slain the ketchamjones?
Come to my arms, my bettle boy;
Oh, dudleydean, oh, dibblee day,
He trumbulled in his joy.

'T was brickley and the edmahans
Did mills and storer like a lion,
All hardwick were the donovans
And the reXHitchcock obrien.

SPRING KNOWS

I

SPRING knows the Dream of an Autumn Flag —
So many games to win — so many games half
won —

Spring knows the Pep that shall never lag —
A long, long Race ahead — a Race that is all but
run —

Swiftly the Summer garbles the Dope,
The golden Vision rending,
Twisting the Luck and dimming the Hope
Long e'er the Season's ending;
Till all that is left to a Fighting Clan,
Through a Hopeless Half of a Schedule's span,
Is the Right to do but the Best it Can
With a Broken Dream, past mending.

2

Youth knows the Dream of a Distant Goal —
So many deeds to do — so many Deeds half done —
Youth writes its Fame in a Phantom scroll —
A long, long Fight ahead — a fight that is all but
won —

Harshly the Swift Years Shatter the Dream,
The Springtime Vision rending,
Crushing the Hope and dimming the Gleam
Long ere the Journey's ending;
Till all that is left in the seething Fight
Is the Tatter'd Banner — the Loser's Right
To the Best He Can Do in the Fading Light
Of his Broken Dream, past mending.

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